

# WCB Community Initiatives & Research Program

## 2007

## SAFE Work – A Way of Life

Established in 1997, the Community Initiatives and Research Program (CIRP) funds projects on injury and disease prevention, safety in the workplace, treatment of workplace injuries, services for injured workers and scientific, medical or other issues related to workers' compensation. In 2007, \$1.1 million dollars was awarded by the Board of Directors to fund such projects.

The CIRP used two processes for receiving applications in 2007, each with different priorities.

The first process, which involved a two-stage approach, focused on:

1. **PREVENTION:** Projects that develop innovative approaches to preventing workplace injuries or illnesses;
2. **PREVENTION:** Projects that identify hazards and prevent injuries for at-risk youth and/or persons with mental or physical disabilities;
3. **RETURN TO WORK:** Projects that examine the barriers and facilitators of return to work programs; or
4. **OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE:** Projects that increase the knowledge, diagnosis and treatment of occupational disease.

The two-stage application process starts with a Letter of Intent (Stage 1) describing the project and its intended benefit to the WCB. Based on a review of the Letters of Intent, selected applicants are invited to submit a full proposal (Stage 2).

The second process involved a Request for Proposals which called specifically for proposals focused on the following two areas:

- Analyzing the Language, Cultural and Literacy Needs of WCB Clients
- Determining What Increases Manitoba's CEOs' and Other Top Management's Commitment to Safety.

The objectives of the CIRP are to:

- Promote, educate, and increase the awareness of workplace injury and illness prevention;
- Achieve practical outcomes which have a positive impact on the WCB and its stakeholders;
- Develop a stronger understanding and further current knowledge of workplace injuries, illnesses, and disabilities;
- Apply acquired knowledge to the development of new techniques to address and reduce workplace injuries, illnesses, and disabilities;
- Identify and promote effective return to work and rehabilitation strategies;
- Evaluate initiatives to assess their impact on reducing workplace injuries, illnesses, and disabilities; and
- Promote research towards advancing medical science where there is a link to workers' compensation issues.

Since the CIRP began, the WCB has contributed approximately \$10.7 million to support 122 innovative Manitoba projects aimed at achieving these goals. More than 65 percent of the funding has supported workplace prevention, education and training initiatives.

The CIRP provides an important instrument for the WCB's community partners to help reduce the pain and suffering of Manitoba's injured workers and their families. With support from the CIRP, the WCB promotes and creates a culture that helps keep Manitoba workers safe at work, and helps them recover as quickly as possible if they are injured on the job.

# 2007 Approved Grants

## ABORIGINAL SAFETY AND HEALTH AWARENESS INITIATIVE

Agency: ..... Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Inc.  
Funding: ..... \$94,055

Purpose: This project will identify barriers and hazards to workplace safety in the urban Aboriginal community. It will deliver culturally appropriate workplace safety and health information to urban Aboriginal communities, and will be implemented through four facilitators representing a cross-section from the Aboriginal community.

Information on current workplace safety and health issues in selected Aboriginal communities will be compiled. A survey of Aboriginal organizations will be conducted in order to review their health and safety policies and document practices. As well, an Aboriginal Safety and Health Awareness Committee will be set up to provide guidance and direction for a culturally appropriate framework on workplace safety and health.

The project will promote and enhance safety, health and rehabilitation programs in Manitoba workplaces, while enhancing the WCB's understanding of complex workers' compensation issues involving Aboriginal workers.

## BRAIN TRAINING FOR MEMORY ENHANCEMENT

Agency: ..... Manitoba Brain Injury Association  
Funding: ..... \$59,460

Purpose: This project will measure the effects of a computerized, cognitive training program on the skills of individuals who have experienced traumatic brain injury. The software for this project is the *Brain Fitness Program 2006* that improves memory, strengthens communication and sharpens thinking by:

- Engaging the individual with demanding brain exercises and a daily training schedule;
- Renormalizing the way information is commonly processed by persons with brain injury;
- Enhancing neuro-modulatory function; and
- Strengthening critical life skills.

The project targets individuals who have been unable to return to previous employment because of cognitive changes resulting from their brain injury. The project plans to offer this service to 60 people over 24 months.

The Brain Fitness Program has proven to have immediate effects on cognitive ability. In the long term, the project is anticipated to improve the individual's quality of life and enhance the capacity to return to work.



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## ESTABLISHING OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE LIMITS

Agency: ..... OHG Consulting  
 Funding: ..... \$24,900

Purpose: This project will produce a manual to help workplace safety and health practitioners comply with the Chemical and Biological Substances Regulation of *The Workplace Safety and Health Act*. This regulation creates threshold limit values (TLVs) that form the basis for specific occupational exposure limits for different workforces and workplaces.

The purpose of the project is to provide an improved understanding of appropriate TLV levels in specific circumstances. Project objectives include:

- Informing safety and health practitioners about the need to adjust TLVs on a regular basis in workplaces with chemical exposures;
- Informing management of their regulatory obligations regarding TLV limits;
- Informing Joint Health and Safety Committees of their responsibility to identify risks related to TLV exposure;
- Posting the guidance manual on a website for easy access and use; and
- Presenting seminars and workshops to workplaces interested in learning how to comply with the TLV regulation.

In the short term, the project aims to help people in the workplace understand regulatory requirements and prevent over-exposure of workers in workplaces where chemicals are used.

The long-term goal is to improve health conditions in the workplace specifically for pregnant women, nursing mothers, older workers and those with specific illnesses.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY GAP ANALYSIS – YOUNG MANITOBBANS WITH DISABILITIES

Agency: ..... On-Site Safety & Health Management Solutions  
 Funding: ..... \$75,000

Purpose: This project will address gaps in knowledge and resources available for young Manitobans with disabilities entering the labour force for the first time.

The project will conduct a gap analysis to determine:

- What safety-related information and training is available and being delivered in Special Education programs throughout Manitoba;
- The health and safety needs of employers and agencies that support the training and placement of disabled youth entering the workforce for the first time; and
- What unique safety issues are faced by employees with disabilities.

The project will develop resource material, while training sessions will be delivered to service providers to communicate project outcomes and to show how to use the resource material.

## INJURED AND DISABLED WORKERS' CENTRE

Agency: ..... Injured Workers Association of Manitoba Inc.  
 Funding: ..... \$100,481

Purpose: This centre provides support to injured workers and their families once their WCB benefits are terminated, or after the decision that an injury is not compensable.

The centre helps injured workers and their families understand, cope and adapt to injuries and post-injury issues. This includes client counseling and referrals to appropriate community programs, as well as help to those who wish to appeal the WCB's decisions by empowering them to present their own appeals.

The centre helps injured workers make informed decisions, take control of their situation and foster a healthier return to work. Ultimately, these services aim to improve an injured worker's sense of healing and self-worth.

## MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT TO WORKPLACE SAFETY

Agency: ..... Institute for Work & Health  
 Funding: ..... \$93,258

Purpose: The Institute for Work and Health (IWH) will study CEO commitment to workplace safety by performing the following:

- A web survey of 150 CEOs and senior managers in Manitoba;
- A safety climate survey of supervisors and leaders in sampled companies; and
- A safety climate survey of 2,500 front line workers.

The safety climate surveys will validate the responses from the management survey by obtaining more information from supervisory and line staff on their perception of managerial commitment to safety and health in the presence of operational and financial demands. Objective safety data, such as record of injuries, injury rates, loss of workdays and safety inspections, will also be analyzed.

A half-day workshop will provide feedback and explore the preliminary results.

This study will provide better understanding about:

- How to obtain and enhance senior management's commitment to occupational health and safety in Manitoba; and
- Factors that drive executive commitment to workplace safety and health.

## LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND LITERACY NEEDS OF WCB CLIENTS

Agency: ..... Prairie Research Associates, Inc.  
 Funding: ..... \$124,906

Purpose: This project will analyze the language, cultural and literacy needs of WCB clients, including both injured workers and employers. The study will develop a demographic profile of WCB clients, assess clients' understanding of the WCB, and determine clients' experiences with the WCB.

This research proposal will involve:

- A mail-out questionnaire to 1,500 WCB covered employers and a telephone survey of 1,000 workers who have had a WCB claim in the last two years. The questionnaires will address the demographic profile of firms' employees, accessibility to WCB services and programs, and their experiences with the WCB.
- Four focus groups with workers in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba.

This study will help the WCB better understand the impact of language, culture, and literacy on the accessibility of its services.

## MANAGERS' AND SUPERVISORS' ROLE IN ENHANCING THE SAFETY AND HEALTH CLIMATE FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Agency: ..... Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba

Funding: ..... \$53,996

Purpose: This study will improve understanding of management's role in establishing the health and safety climate within healthcare facilities. This study will involve a multi-perspective survey of the attitudes and perceptions of managers, supervisors and healthcare providers about health and safety in Manitoba healthcare facilities. Fifty top managers, 200 supervisors and 750 employees from healthcare facilities across Manitoba will be surveyed.

The management and supervisor questionnaire will address health and safety policies, practices, organizational supports and perceptions of the current level of health and safety risks within the facility. The questionnaire for non-supervisory staff will focus on perceptions of management and supervisory support for health and safety, its importance to the organization, perceptions of major health and safety threats, level of group support, health and safety practices, and perceptions of the safety climate of the organization.

In the short term, this project will:

- Identify gaps in the management of health and safety in Manitoba healthcare facilities;
- Enhance the understanding of management and supervisor attitudes on the health and safety climate within Manitoba healthcare facilities;
- Provide information on healthcare providers' perception of health and safety threats;
- Recommend programs within healthcare settings to correct the gaps;
- Provide information about healthcare providers' perceptions of management and supervisor support for a positive health and safety environment; and
- Clarify the relationship between the health and safety climate and injuries and illnesses within healthcare facilities.

In the long term, this project will help to improve the health and safety climate within Manitoba healthcare facilities and improve WCB experience rates within healthcare facilities.

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## SAFE WORK FOR AN AGING WORKFORCE

Agency: ..... Andrew R. Dolhy Ergonomics Consulting

Funding: ..... \$32,300

Purpose: This project will help workplaces recognize the effects of different types of work on older workers and how their physical and cognitive capabilities relate to safe work practices. This project will:

- Hold a two-day symposium on the aging workforce for academics, health and safety professionals, committee members, managers, supervisors and labour representatives. An action plan developed by the participants will form one project outcome;
- Provide ergonomic resources to workplaces that use the action plan to reduce the risk of injury to older workers; and
- Develop a best practices guide on job accommodations for older workers using information from the action plan and on-site observations.

The long-term benefits from this program will be increased awareness about the aging workforce, greater consideration to musculoskeletal injuries and the reduction of these injuries among older workers.

## SAFE WORKERS OF TOMORROW HEALTH AND SAFETY 2007/2008 PROGRAM

Agency: ..... Workers of Tomorrow Safety Centre Inc.

Funding: ..... \$153,276

Purpose: This program's primary focus is to educate students and young workers on their rights as Manitoba workers, and to help them prevent workplace injuries and illnesses by assessing risk and recognizing hazards. Numerous presentations and training programs will be made to high school students by a volunteer speakers' bureau consisting of health and safety experts and young workers who have experienced workplace injuries.

## WELDING EXPOSURES IN SMALL BUSINESS

Agency: ..... OHG Consulting

Funding: ..... \$48,925

Purpose: Welders are exposed to welding fumes which place them at an elevated risk for cancer, kidney disease and lower reproductive capacity. This project will measure fume exposure among 200 welders from 40 small welding shops in Winnipeg. The study will:

- Provide each business surveyed with a report on the exposures to their workers and options for corrective action; and
- Share the findings of the study through a final report and a pamphlet on welding safety.

The sampling data will be immediately compared with legislated health and safety standards.

The project will help reduce occupational cancers and other diseases among welders in Manitoba.



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## YOUNG WORKERS, LEARNING DISORDERS AND SAFE WORK

Agency: ..... Twin Valley Co-op Ltd.  
Funding: ..... \$90,000

Purpose: This project targets workers (youth and adults) with learning disabilities working in entry-level positions at the Twin Valley Co-operatives located in Rosburn, Russell, Birtle, Miniota and Elkhorn. This project will develop training tools for the employer to instill safe work practices and retain workers with learning disabilities. The project will:

- Undertake a job and task analysis for each entry-level job in the food, general merchandise, and petroleum departments of the Co-op;
- Identify risks and develop training and safety measures; and
- Create an orientation and safety program for entry-level positions, customized to the specific needs of the target group.

The expertise of the stakeholder group, consisting of teachers, counselors, home economists, occupational therapists and management, will be used in the entry-level job analysis exercise.

In the long term, this project will raise safety awareness among employers hiring workers with learning disabilities. The project will become the catalyst for more work on employing individuals with learning disabilities, especially in rural communities.

## YOUNG WORKER RESPONSES TO WORKPLACE HAZARDS

Agency: ..... Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba  
Funding: ..... \$55,232

Purpose: This project will study the responses of teenaged workers to workplace hazards. It will investigate what factors predict whether young workers will quit hazardous work, speak up about potential hazards, engage in hazardous work out of fear of being disloyal, or ignore potential hazards altogether. The study will also explore the relationship between the different responses and their link to injury exposure.

The study will be undertaken in four stages:

First, the study will hold focus groups with teenage workers in a variety of jobs common to young workers.

Second, participant feedback will be captured about attitudes, emotions, or behaviors in the workplace.

Third, 400 employed young people aged 15-18 years will be surveyed over time concerning their workplace working conditions, incidents or near misses, the behavioral factors in response to workplace hazards, safety training experience, supervision and their commitment to the employer.

The fourth stage will communicate the study results to teenagers, educators, employers and others. These results will be useful for supervisor safety training, safety management and other educational programs promoting safety among young workers.

The study will produce a tool for measuring young worker responses to workplace hazards. This tool will help enhance existing and future educational safety programs resulting in fewer injuries and a reduction in long-term social and economic costs associated with injuries among young workers.



***"In many ways, young workers are among the most vulnerable to on-the-job injuries and illnesses. Ultimately, we hope to contribute to reducing their vulnerability and in turn reduce the long-term social and economic costs that result from their workplace injuries. We want to thank the WCB for helping us in our efforts to learn more about young peoples' responses to workplace hazards."***

— Nick Turner

Young Worker Response to Workplace Hazards  
I.H. Asper School of Business  
(in partnership with Sean Tucker, Queen's School of Business)

### NINGWANUK MESHQUAJESE WINGS OF CHANGE

Agency: ..... MFL Occupational Health Centre

Funding: ..... \$121,236

Purpose: The project will help Workplace Safety and Health committees deal with workplace issues through the use of Sharing Circles. The seven traditional Aboriginal teachings and three workers' safety and health rights will be applied. The project targets workplaces outside of Winnipeg and intends to work in partnership with the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre, MFL unions (including the United Steelworkers Union) and Safe Workers of Tomorrow.

This project will create a bridge between Aboriginal culture and Workplace Safety and Health committees. The project seeks to better engage Aboriginal workers with non-Aboriginal workers when dealing with workplace health and safety issues. It will build on the earlier Wings of Change project, which conducted Sharing Circles primarily within Winnipeg and developed Sharing Circle Guides.

In the short term, this project will give many workplaces outside of Winnipeg an opportunity to participate in a program designed to address workplace safety and health within Aboriginal culture.

In the long term, the project will empower a vulnerable group of workers on workplace safety and health using a culturally appropriate approach. In addition, the project hopes to sensitize non-Aboriginal workers to Aboriginal cultures.



# Previously Approved Grants

## Projects IN PROGRESS

### ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND YOUTH IN SAFETY

Agency: ..... Northern Aboriginal Iskwewak (NAI)

Funding: ..... \$99,660

Purpose: The NAI will play a key role in encouraging northern Aboriginal women and youth to work with other northern stakeholders to create awareness of workplace health and safety challenges, create a consensus to deal with those challenges, develop capacities to deal with specific issues, build partnerships, share common experiences and move towards a healthier and safer workforce in northern Manitoba.

A large part of this project's work is focused on community-based workshops and training activities within five northern communities.

Project outcomes for Aboriginal women and youth as well as community leaders and employers in Northern Manitoba will be:

- Greater interest and awareness about workplace health and safety issues and other specific workplace issues;
- Increased knowledge of health and safety in the workplace through the use of safe work procedures and practices, including identifying potential hazards, preventing accidents and exposures to unsafe or unhealthy working conditions, and the proper use of personal protective equipment;
- Increased knowledge of employer and employee rights and responsibilities; and
- A replicable model for generating momentum throughout the north, so that community leadership, employers and employees can promote proper workplace health and safety training activities through the community workshops and training sessions.

In the long term, the project will increase awareness of Aboriginal women and youth regarding workplace health and safety issues, and reduce workplace injuries and illnesses.

***"At the WCB, we are working to contribute to a strong culture of safety in Manitoba through proactive approaches such as our partnership in SAFE Work and our Community Initiatives and Research Program."***

**— Doug Sexsmith**  
President and CEO, Workers  
Compensation Board of Manitoba

## EFFECTIVE EARLY RETURN TO WORK: SOLVING THE GAPS IN THE CASE MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

Agency: ..... Brandon Regional Health Authority (BRHA)

Funding: ..... \$82,932

Purpose: BRHA will address gaps in its current Return to Work (RTW) program. A proactive, seamless approach to disability management through interdisciplinary collaboration will improve early RTW systems, will act as a trial for the Provincial Health Sector Injury Reduction Strategy, is transferable to other healthcare organizations and community partners and will decrease WCB costs.

This project will address the RTW gaps through a seamless, client-centered, co-ordinated approach while maintaining consistency in patient care. BRHA's early RTW program will increase access to global rehabilitation resources in a consistent and timely fashion.

The program will:

- Improve interdisciplinary communication and collaboration;
- Create a positive work environment;
- Increase productivity;
- Reduce costs;
- Decrease recruitment and retention issues; and
- Improve patient, client and resident care.

The program will benefit both the employee and employer by providing a co-ordinated, seamless approach which will include Physical Demand Analysis development and appropriate staff support (OT, PT and Physician).

The benefits to the target group (employees of the BRHA) will be:

- Reduced anxiety related to job security;
- Improved patient care;
- Responsive culture to workplace injuries;
- Early RTW;
- Improved safety and well-being;
- Improved rehabilitation service;
- Enhanced injury prevention; and
- Reduced injury rate.

In the short term, BRHA expects better matching of an employee's physical capabilities with the job requirements and improved knowledge and attitude of all key stakeholders about early RTW programs.

In the long term, BRHA expects reduced disability claims by type, duration and job classification, along with a decrease in compensation costs.



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### CRANE AWARENESS COURSE

Agency: ..... Operating Engineers Training Institute of Manitoba Inc.

Funding: ..... \$90,000

Purpose: A four-hour Crane Awareness Course is being offered free of charge to educate and increase the awareness of those who work with or around cranes. Some of the topics covered during the Crane Awareness Course are:

- Basic rigging;
- Basic signaling;
- Machine types, components and systems;
- Personal protective equipment;
- Charts;
- Conditions and pre-lifts; and
- Workplace Safety and Health regulations.

To date, over 600 people have received the training, with the project on track to deliver the training to at least 1,000 workers throughout Manitoba. A pocket guide for the course is provided to all participants for a quick reference when questions arise on the jobsite.

### DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY GROUPS FOR RURAL WORKPLACES IN MANITOBA

Agency: ..... MFL Occupational Health Centre (MFLOHC)

Funding: ..... \$173,900

Purpose: MFLOHC develops and implements Health and Safety Groups in rural Manitoba communities with an emphasis on workplace health, safety and ergonomics. This project provides Health and Safety Groups with resources to undertake self audits of their health and safety program in up to three rural Manitoba communities.

The project is divided into three phases, with work on the project currently at Phase 1:

- Phase 1: A model for Health and Safety Groups in rural Manitoba will be developed based on current formal and informal groups, the needs of rural communities and experiences from other groups in and outside of Manitoba. Ergonomic services will also be provided.
- Phase 2: Community-based Health and Safety Groups will be organized in up to three rural communities. Each group will be provided with resources and activities to help them develop and become sustainable.
- Phase 3: Health and Safety Groups will be provided with resources and training to develop and improve their health and safety program and address their high priority health and safety issues.

### INCREASING LIFE PARTICIPATION WITH APHASIA

Agency: ..... Speechworks

Funding: ..... \$66,150

Purpose: This project provides free intervention and treatment for 20 individuals affected by work-related communication disorders. The treatment uses a computer-based intervention called the *Lingraphica*. People with any type of communication problem, including cognitive or linguistic problems, are eligible to participate. To date, 13 people have successfully participated. Results have shown the intervention reduces communication impairments and disabilities and increases meaningful participation in life.

### HOSPITALIZATION IN WINNIPEG DUE TO OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE – PILOT STUDY

Agency: . . . . . University of Manitoba – Departments of Internal Medicine and Community Health Sciences

Funding: . . . . . \$36,773

Purpose: This pilot study will identify:

- The extent of occupational exposures to hazardous substances and work conditions among a sample of males admitted to an internal medicine ward at a Winnipeg hospital;
- How these exposures may have caused or contributed to the development of the injury/illness; and
- How these exposures may have contributed to other past health conditions.

During the project, 365 male patients will be randomly selected for the study. Information will be gathered on their occupational history, use of protective equipment and exposures to a variety of occupational hazards. Depending upon the findings of this pilot, the study could be expanded to a broader group of patients.

To date, approximately 50 percent of the sample has been studied. The study is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2008.

### ABORIGINAL WORKERS EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROJECT

Agency: . . . . . MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc.

Funding: . . . . . \$182,870

Purpose: The project equates traditional Aboriginal teachings with workers' rights within the Sharing Circle. The project also provides training sessions to enable others to become Sharing Circle Guides. A Spirit Toolkit is the core support of this work. The Spirit Toolkit includes:

- A fact sheet promoting the program and encouraging a healthy workplace;
- A laminated Medicine Wheel Map that depicts the effects of working conditions on workers as well as their co-workers, family and community;
- Seven Teachings posters;
- Medicine Wheel Puzzle;
- Indian Act Medicine Wheel Knowledge Game; and
- The Power of One Storytelling CD.

Most of the work has been completed, with the final phase involving analysis of those who have participated in the project. A final report is due early in 2008.



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## MANITOBA IMMIGRANTS' SAFETY INITIATIVE (MISI)

Agency: ..... Safety Services Manitoba (SSM)

Funding: ..... \$198,700

**Purpose:** This project intends to prevent workplace-related injury, death, and illness among immigrant workers in Manitoba. This project will create and evaluate a prevention program model that will be used to build a sustainable *Manitoba Coalition for Immigrant Worker Health and Safety*. This coalition will address the unique needs of immigrant workers, their employers and a variety of community stakeholders.

This initiative is designed in four phases over two years, with SSM as the lead organization in partnership with the International Centre of Winnipeg. The research phase is complete. The literature review, done by the University of Winnipeg's Institute of Urban Studies, is also complete and is available on the SSM and Settle Manitoba's websites. An inventory of Immigrant Workplace Health and Safety Programs and Resources in Manitoba has also been done.

The development phase will see four committees develop programs and resources related to the challenges presented by language, cultural differences, limited education resources and the workers' own understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

In 2008, workshops and resources will be delivered to immigrant workers and workplaces in Winnipeg and six rural areas. Also, the initiative will continue to engage immigrant workers, employers and other stakeholders to build a sustainable coalition.

## MINERVA SAFE MANITOBA

Agency: ..... Manitoba Labour and Immigration, Workplace Safety and Health Division (WSHD)

Funding: ..... \$50,000

**Purpose:** WSHD, through Minerva SAFE Manitoba, provides opportunities for post-secondary institutions to incorporate occupational health and safety into the core curricula of business, engineering and other post-secondary programs. WSHD is working with rural post-secondary institutions such as Brandon University, Assiniboine Community College and the University College of the North.

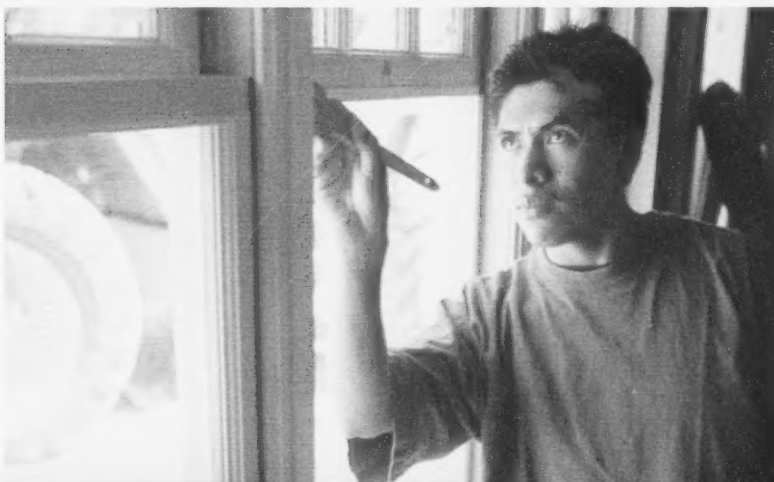
The benefits to Manitoba employers are long-term, as graduates from the participating post-secondary institutions, future managers, supervisors and workers demonstrate a better understanding of the principles of occupational safety and health.

## PEGUIS SAFE WORK PROGRAM

Agency: ..... Peguis First Nation

Funding: ..... \$175,000

**Purpose:** The objective of this project is to increase workplace health and safety awareness in the Peguis community by focusing on working conditions, current work practices and the knowledge of safe work practices within the community. The project managers are conducting a community-wide survey of workplace health and safety practices at public and private businesses and organizations. The survey is also being conducted among workers involved in traditional occupations such as fishing and trapping. The information from the survey is being used to develop workplace safety seminars and workshops for Peguis youth, employers, employees, and the community at large.



*"It is so important for more workplace safety programs to be available for all workers - especially those workers from different cultures who are not familiar with the language. Communicating workplace safety to people from other countries presents unique challenges for the workers and their employers. We hope that the Manitoba Immigrants' Safety Initiative can meet those challenges."*

— **Michael Walte**  
Executive Director, Safety Services Manitoba

## PHASE 2 – THE CAREER PORTFOLIO WORKPLACE SAFETY & HEALTH PROJECT

Agency: ..... Technical and Vocational High School (Tec Voc)  
 Funding: ..... \$96,000

Purpose: Phase 1 of this project developed a workplace health and safety curriculum, *The Ownership of a Culture – Putting Students First*, and integrated it into various programs offered at Tec Voc.

Phase 2 builds on the previous phase by:

- Integrating workplace health and safety content into the current *Tec-Voc Career Portfolio*;
- Working with Manitoba high schools to develop awareness of the need to provide young workers with workplace health and safety information and to make the project's resources available for free; and
- Revising and augmenting the assessment component of the Tec Voc Health and Safety Curriculum, *The Ownership of a Culture*, so that it can be recognized as a creditable half-course at the grade 10 level by Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth.

With the help of this project, high school students will be introduced to the concepts of workplace health and safety.

## SEEING THE WORKPLACE WITH "NEW EYES"

Agency: ..... Dorothy Wigmore  
 Funding: ..... \$133,900

Purpose: This project aims to help joint health and safety committees meet the requirements of the Workplace Safety and Health Act. A resource is being developed titled "A Guide for Joint Health and Safety Committees and Workplace Health and Safety Representatives" that will help such committees prevent workplace injuries and illnesses. Project staff are working with a Manitoba workplace to develop the resource, and to assist the workplace to further develop an effective health and safety program.



## WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY-BASED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN NORTHERN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Agency: ..... Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN)/InterGroup Consultants Ltd.

Funding: ..... \$148,919

Purpose: The first stage of this project identified and prioritized community needs to address workplace health and safety issues at Northern Aboriginal construction projects. To assess current health and safety practices, construction in Nelson House was studied. Some of the findings concluded that:

- There is a lack of funds for contractors to implement a formal workplace health and safety program;
- Injuries were not always reported due to concerns by workers that it could impact their job;
- More culturally-appropriate education training strategies are required; and
- Improving workplace health and safety needs to begin with NCN leadership.

A workplace safety needs assessment workbook was developed to explain the process for assessing workplace health and safety to other Aboriginal communities. As well, Sharing Circles were used to encourage individuals to share their knowledge and perspectives regarding health and safety at construction projects.

The second stage will implement the strategies identified in stage one, which include:

- Establishing a community-based construction safety committee and coordinator;
- Delivering safety training to workers; and
- Instituting a formal incident/injury reporting mechanism.

Based on an evaluation of the initiatives, refinements will be made to the model so that it can be used by other Northern Aboriginal communities involved in construction projects.

## MODIFIED WORK PRACTICES AND QUALITY OF LIFE OUTCOMES FOR WORK-RELATED MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES

Agency: ..... MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc. (MFLOHC)

Funding: ..... \$85,000

Purpose: This project surveys the quality of life (and influencing factors) of workers with musculoskeletal injuries involved in return to work (RTW) programs. This will help employers develop the most suitable modified work program.

The project has two phases:

- In the first phase, a study will be done to compare injured workers who have been in a RTW program with a control group of non-injured workers at the same workplace. The study will survey workers' quality of life, the type of workplace accommodation, the location of injury, the stage of injury and the personal characteristics of the worker.
- In the second phase, participating workplaces will be provided with training, advice and preventative measures about ergonomics for injured workers in their RTW programs. As well, a best practices resource guide about accommodating injured workers will be developed.

To date, the RTW survey has been developed and distributed. Site visits to workplaces to provide RTW services are well underway.

# Previously Approved Grants

Projects **COMPLETED**  
IN 2007

## ASSESSING THE INJURY PREVENTION, DISABILITY MANAGEMENT AND RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAM NEEDS OF HIGH-RISK EMPLOYERS

Agency: ..... Dr. Garry Corbett

Funding: ..... \$165,150

**Purpose:** This project evaluated the programs of 50 Manitoba employers from a variety of industries. A number of conclusions and recommendations were drawn, including how to assist employers, provide education and promote early intervention.

Interviews with these organizations focused on their programs, what they thought were barriers to bringing disabled workers back to the workplace in a safe and timely manner and recommendations to improve service at the WCB. The audits and assessments examined sixteen areas of each organization's program and compared them to "best practices".

This project revealed two things: first, on the whole, employers are eager to learn how to implement effective disability management programming; second, there is a significant lack of understanding of the activities needed to provide effective service to disabled workers. The project demonstrated that organizations want to do "the right thing" but lack the knowledge to develop and implement effective programming.

## DISABILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Agency: ..... Canadian Auto Workers (CAW)

Funding: ..... \$110,930

**Purpose:** This project delivered educational sessions on disability management to approximately 100 CAW union workplaces and other Manitoba workplaces. The sessions helped workers and employers to recognize, understand and be aware of return to work policies and strategies. The sessions focused on how to assess workers' restrictions, how to modify jobs for a timely return to work and how to implement a workplace committee to deal with return to work issues. The project also assisted workers and employers to implement disability management policies in the workplace. A disability management manual tailored to the Manitoba workplace was developed to support the educational sessions.



**SAFE  
WORK**

SPOT THE HAZARD  
ASSESS THE RISK  
FIND A SAFER WAY  
EVERYDAY

## DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR MANITOBA FARMERS WHO LIVE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

Agency: ..... Canadian Centre on Disability Studies (CCDS)

Funding: ..... \$100,000

Purpose: The project supports farmers with disabilities, improves co-ordination between service providers and empowers farmers with disabilities to address their challenges. The project identified barriers and facilitators in return to work for farmers with disabilities, community supports available and needed, and family supports available and needed.

The most significant outcome from this study was the development of "The Healthy Farmers, Healthy Communities Resource Kit". The kit provides information for farmers, service providers, organizations and communities to help farmers and their families prepare for, cope with, or prevent challenges of injury, long-term illness, disability or aging.

## INCREASING SAFETY AWARENESS IN THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY IN MANITOBA

Agency: ..... I.A.T.S.E. - Motion Picture Technicians

Funding: ..... \$10,533

Purpose: This project focused on increasing safety awareness in the motion picture industry. Safety bulletins were developed and distributed in conjunction with the Local's newsletter on the following topics:

- Symbols of Safety
- Working at Heights
- Working Safely in the Heat
- Transporting Dangerous Goods
- Working in the Cold
- Women in the Film Industry
- Back to Basics
- New Workplace Safety and Health Regulation
- Due Diligence
- Know Your Rights
- A New Perspective on Human Error
- Reporting Injuries.

A SAFE Work luggage tag, with a message that reinforced SAFE working behaviors, was developed and distributed to members. As well, a poster outlining the procedure to be followed if an employee feels that he/she is in an unsafe work situation was redesigned and distributed.

## INJURED AND DISABLED WORKERS' CENTRE

Agency: ..... Injured Workers Association of Manitoba Inc. (IDWC)  
 Funding: ..... \$98,452

Purpose: IDWC supports injured workers following the termination of WCB benefits, or following the decision that an injury is not compensable. These free services help the injured and disabled worker reduce the psychological impact of injuries on themselves and their families. They also help the client:

- Read their files;
- Understand the insurance process;
- Prepare their own appeals;
- Face medical matters;
- Deal with family problems; and
- Address financial concerns.

During the past funding year, there were 204 clients who were provided with the services offered by IDW and 11 workshops were held.

## PROVINCIAL MOBILE BACK CARE EDUCATION & INJURY PREVENTION TEAM

Agency: ..... Community Therapy Services (CTS)  
 Funding: ..... \$100,000

Purpose: This project focused on injury prevention in Manitoba healthcare settings outside Winnipeg. The project established a mobile back care team that developed and delivered educational programs which:

- Helped implement monitoring systems for healthcare workers who lift and transfer patients, and develop corrective actions as required;
- Helped develop back care teams to educate and encourage workers at each worksite to follow safe lifting and transferring practices; and
- Contributed to establishing a culture of workplace safety.

On-site visits were made to healthcare facilities in the Interlake, Assiniboine, Nor-Man, and North Eastman Health Regions. Facility visits involved:

- Environmental assessments, including evaluation of workplace designs;
- Equipment assessments;
- Staff questionnaires;
- Injury data collection;
- Work observations;
- Meetings with site managers and employees;
- Analysis of work organization and management; and
- Analysis of relevant risk management policies and procedures.

Comprehensive reports were prepared for each site visited, which included a summary of the findings, the identified risk factors, and risk control recommendations.

In the final stage of this project, CTS, in conjunction with the Workplace Safety and Health Division, provided three-day sessions in several centres to train staff how to deliver back care educational programs to healthcare workers.

## SAFE WORKERS OF TOMORROW HEALTH AND SAFETY 2006/2007 PROGRAM

Agency: . . . . . Workers of Tomorrow Safety Centre Inc.

Funding: . . . . . \$149,444

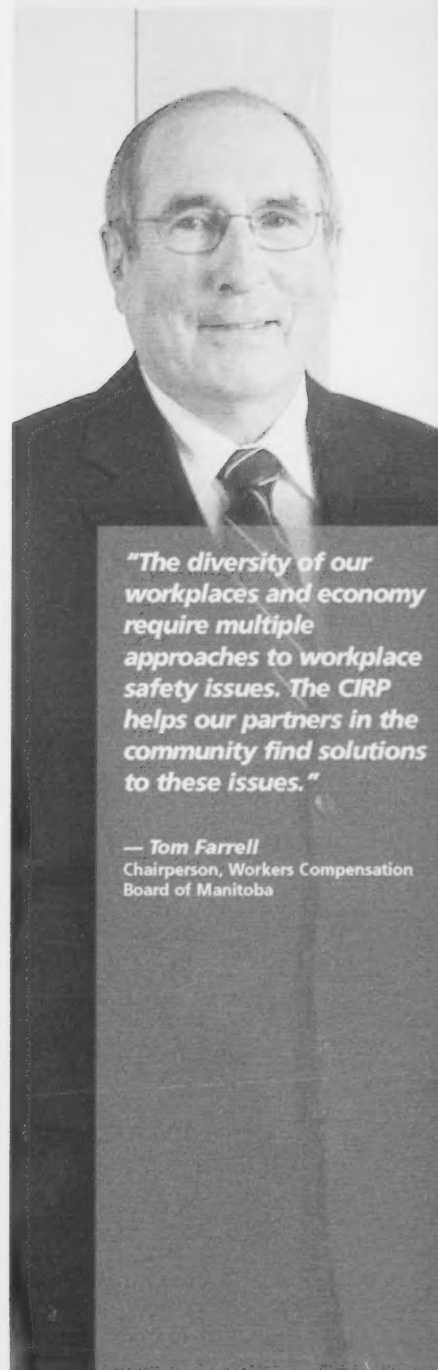
Purpose: The program provides classroom presentations to students in Manitoba on:

- Recognizing workplace hazards;
- Preventing workplace injury, illness and death;
- Working with hazardous materials;
- Using personal protective equipment;
- Educating Manitoba workers about their health and safety rights; and
- Taking action if a workplace injury arises.

For the 2006-2007 school year, 662 presentations were made to 17,784 students.

In addition to classroom presentations, many other activities were undertaken by the Safe Workers of Tomorrow Program. Promotions to schools, school boards, school superintendents and school administrators increased the awareness of the program.

Networking with Aboriginal organizations, on going recruiting of volunteer speakers and co-ordinating the Day of Mourning also strengthened young workers' knowledge of workplace safety.



***"The diversity of our workplaces and economy require multiple approaches to workplace safety issues. The CIRP helps our partners in the community find solutions to these issues."***

**— Tom Farrell**  
Chairperson, Workers Compensation  
Board of Manitoba

## SAFE Work – A Way of Life

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For copies of completed reports, including those completed before 2007, contact Janice Meszaros, Manager, Community Initiatives and Research Program, at [jmeszaro@wcb.mb.ca](mailto:jmeszaro@wcb.mb.ca), (204) 954-4650 or toll free outside Winnipeg at 1-800-362-3340 extension 4650. Please visit the WCB website at [www.wcb.mb.ca](http://www.wcb.mb.ca) for information on the Community Initiatives and Research Program.

Please call (204) 954-4760 to receive this document in large print format.

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